Claims

1. A method for treating a patient diagnosed with or at risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis, said method comprising administering to the patient an azole and a steroid, wherein the azole and steroid are systemically administered simultaneously or within 14 days of each other, in amounts sufficient to treat said patient.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said azole and steroid are administered within 10 days of each other.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said azole and steroid are administered within five days of each other.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said azole and steroid are administered within twenty-four hours of each other.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said azole is an imidazole or a triazole.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said steroid is a corticosteroid.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein said corticosteroid is a glucocorticoid or a mineralocorticoid.

8. The method of claim 5, wherein said imidazole is selected sulconazole, miconazole, clotrimazole, oxiconazole, butocontazole, tioconazole, econazole, and ketoconazole.

9. The method of claim 5, wherein said triazole is selected from itrazonazole, fluconazole, voriconazole, posaconazole, ravuconazole, and terconazole.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein said glucocorticoid is selected from cortisone, dexamethasone, hydrocortisone, methylprednisolone, prednisone, traimcinolone, and diflorasone.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the ratio of azole to steroid administered is 10 to 1.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the ratio of azole to steroid administered is 4 to 1.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein a low dose of said azole is administered.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein a low dose of said steroid is administered.

15. The method of claim 13 or 14, wherein said low dose is less than 10 milligrams.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein said azole is administered in an amount of 1 to 2000 milligrams and said steroid is administered in an amount of 1 to 1500 milligrams.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein said azole is administered in an amount of 25 to 800 milligrams and said steroid is administered in an amount of 1 to 30 milligrams.

18. A method for treating a patient diagnosed with or at risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis, said method comprising administering to said patient:

a) a first compound selected from sulconazole, miconazole, clotrimazole, oxiconazole, butocontazole, tioconazole, econazole, and ketoconazole, or itrazonazole, fluconazole, voriconazole, posaconazole, ravuconazole, and terconazole; and

b) a second compound selected from dexamethasone, hydrocortisone, methylprednisolone, prednisone, traimcinolone, and diflorasone;

wherein said first and second compounds are administered simultaneously or within 14 days of each other, and wherein said first and second compounds are administered in amounts sufficient to treat rheumatoid arthritis in said patient.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the ratio of azole to steroid administered is 10 to 1.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the ratio of azole to steroid administered is 4 to 1.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein a low dose of said azole is administered.

22. The method of claim 18, wherein a low dose of said steroid is administered.

23. The method of claim 21 or 22, wherein said low dose is less than 10 milligrams.

24. The method of claim 18, wherein said first compound is administered in an amount of 1 to 2000 milligrams and said second compound is administered in an amount of 1 to 1500 milligrams.

25. The method of claim 18, wherein said first compound is administered in an amount of 25 to 800 milligrams and said second compound is administered in an amount of 1 to 30 milligrams.

26. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and an azole and a steroid, wherein said azole and said steroid are present in an amount that, when systemically administered to a patient, inhibit or reduce the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis; and wherein said azole is not effective as an anti-fungal agent.

27. The composition of claim 26, wherein said azole is present in an amount of 1 to 200 milligrams and said steroid is administered in an amount of 1 to 1500 milligrams.

28. The composition of claim 27, wherein said azole is present in an amount of 5 to 25 milligrams and said steroid is administered in an amount of 1 to 30 milligrams.

29. The method of claim 26, wherein said composition comprises a low dose of said azole.

30. The method of claim 26, wherein said composition comprises a low dose of said steroid.

31. The method of claim 29 or 30, wherein said low dose is less than 10 milligrams.

32. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and an azole and a steroid, wherein said azole is in amounts that are not effective as an antifungal agent.